Public Utility Commission

5051. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since taken a decision to set up a Public Utility Coommission in the country to look into the consumers grievances; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): *(a) and (b) In accordance* with the recommendation of the Central Consumer Protection Council, the Central Government constituted a working Group to examine the necessity of setting up of Public Utilities Commission. The Report was submitted by the Working Group. Public Utilities Commission is a new concept in our country and various ramifications of the proposal have to be considered in depth before arriving at a decision.

Allotment of Levy Sugar to Maharashtra

5052. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that allotment of levy sugar to the State of Maharashtra still continues on the basis of old projected population of 1986 and if so, the details of the allotment of sugar made to the State during the year 1993-94;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State did not receive about 15,000 MT of levy sugar out of the total allotment during 1993-94 and if so, what are the reasons therefor and the details of the steps taken to ensure the supply of entire alloted to that State;

(c) whether Government had received any request from the Government of Maharashtra to increase the quantum of levy sugar as per latest population and if so, the details of increase demanded by Government of Maharashtra; and

(d) what decision has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The allotment of levy sugar to the State of Maharashtra still contnues on the basis of projected population as on 1-10-1986. The details of allotment of levy sugar made to Maharashtra State on the above basis during 1993-94 are given as under :

(i) Monthly quota of levy sugar:	29938 M.T.
(ii) 5 per cent ad hoc increase (allowed from August 1991 to March, 1994):	1497 M.T.
(iii) Yearly festival Quota: (calender year-wise)	9014 M.T.

(b) The Government of Maharashtra during June, 1994 had reported that they could not lift levy sugar to the tune of 15, 393.9 M.T. from January upto Moy, 1994 within the specified validity period. It was, however, decided that quantity of 3,500.00 M.T. be re-alloted to the State Government to meet the short-fall and the remaining quantity was treated as lapsed. The State Government of Maharashtra was also informed accordingly.

(c) No demand for increasing the levy quota of sugar of Maharashtra has been received from the State Government of Maharashtra recently.

(d) Does not arise.

Criterion for Allocation of Fair Price Shops

5033. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will thle Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government have advised the States to give special consideration to the applicants belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the allocation of Fair Price Shops; and

(b) if so, what is the Statewise number of persons belonging to Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes, who own Fair Price Shops as on date?

THE MINSTER OF CIVIL SUPPLES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) The operational responsibility for implementation of Public Distribution System (PDS) is that of the State Governments and UT Administrations. Decisions relating to eligibility criteria and allotment of fair price shops, are matters within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments|UT Administrations. However, the Central Government has odvised the State Governments|UT Administrations to reserve a percentage of fair price shops for allotment to SC|STs and women. The Central Government does not maintain data on fair price shops earmarked and allocated to SCs|STs.

Decline in availability of quality products

5054. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the availibity of quality products in the country, particularly food items have declined.

(b) if so, whether the Bureau of Indian Standards and other Central agencies have failed to put a check for inferior products;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what concrete measures Government propose to adopt so that only quality products are available in the market?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Bureau of Indian Standards has brought out a very large number of National Standards on the quality of various food products through a consensus process involving various Government and statutory organisation like Directorate General of Health Services. Directorate of Marketing and Inspection and Ministry of Food Processing Industries. These standards also incorporate the mandatory, requirements of the PFA Rules and are by and large harmonized by international standards.

Through BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme, under which a licence is granted to a food product manufacturer who is able to ensure the conformity of his product to the relevant Indian Stanadrds, the quality of the food products for the consumer is ensured. Also, the food items packed under AGMARK Quality Control Programme are pretested and certified as per notified standards.

(d) While the BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme is mainly voluntary in nature, for certain products like food colours and food additives, vanaspati, infant milk food, infant formulate and condenced milk, conformity to